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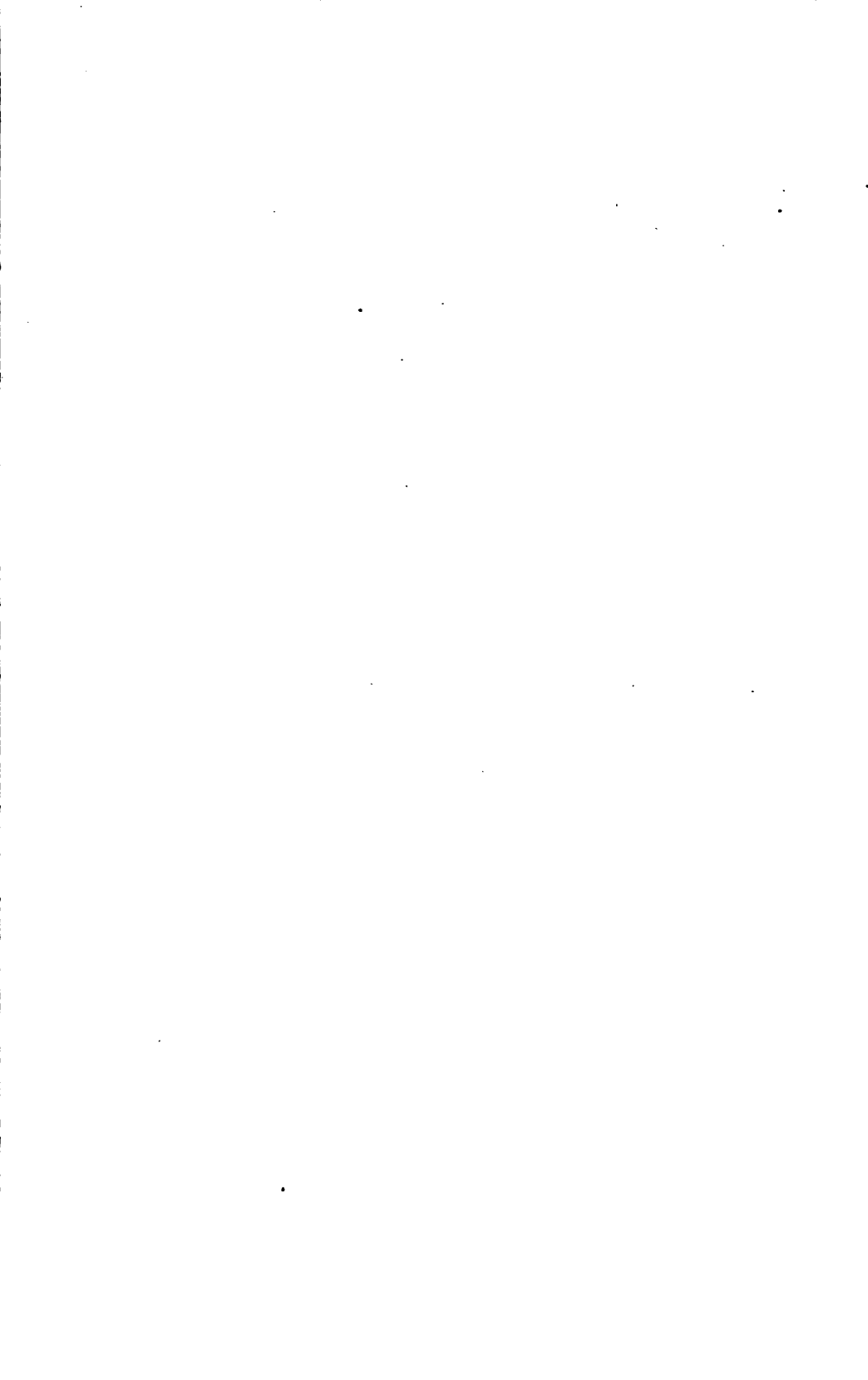
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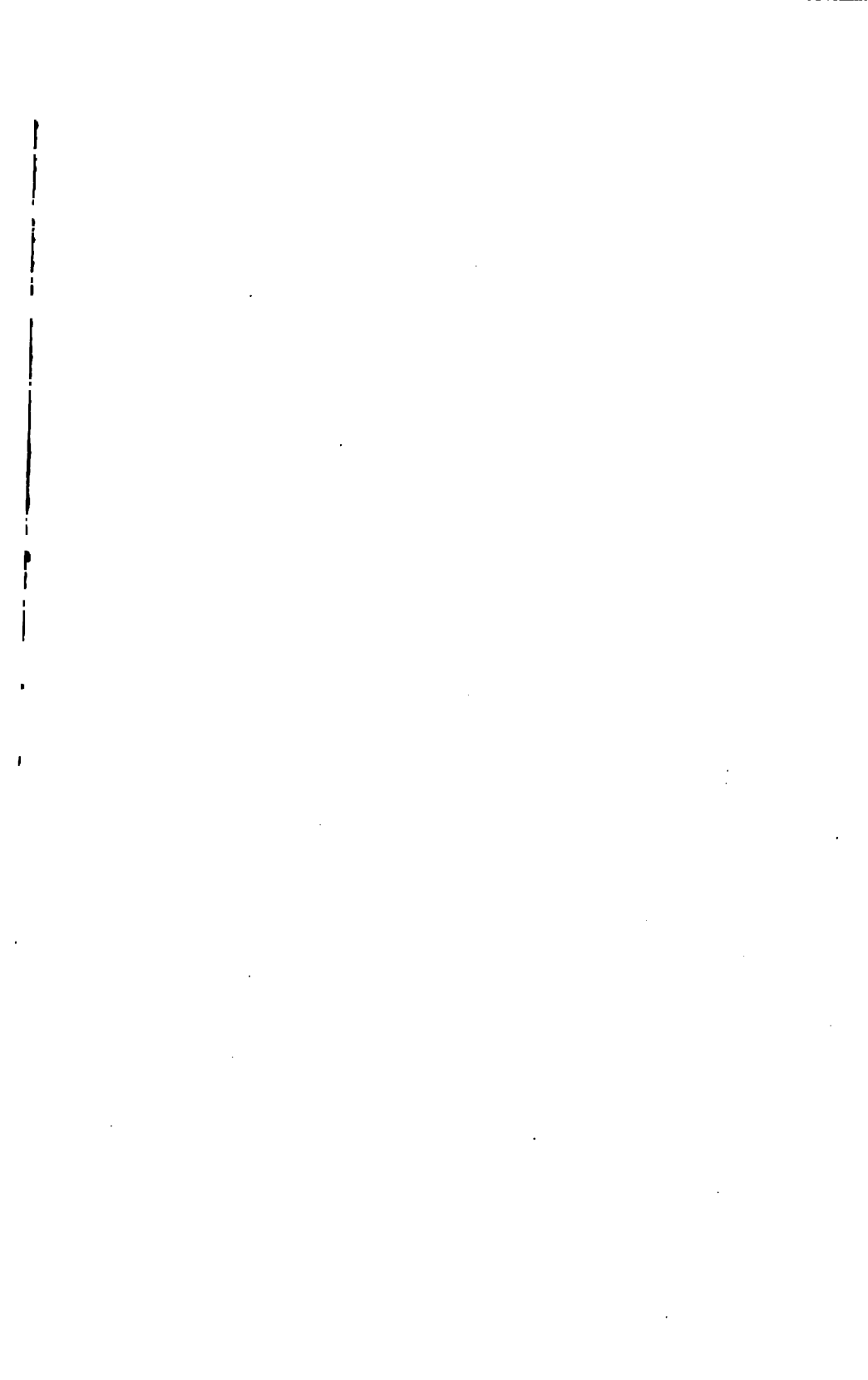




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Reynolds's Indian War



THE ATTACK ON THE PEIWAR KOTAL

2ND DECEMBER 1878

from the Painting by Frederick W. Hamilton

LONDON: H. K. BENTLEY, 15, CECIL ST. 1879.

CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

BY

JOHN F. KELLY

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

AND

OF THE

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

AND

OF THE

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

OF THE

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

OF THE

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

OF THE

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION



FORTY-ONE YEARS IN INDIA

FROM

Subaltern to Commander-in-Chief

BY

**FIELD-MARSHAL
LORD ROBERTS OF KANDAHAR**
V.C., K.P., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.



PEIWAR KOTAL

WITH PORTRAITS AND MAPS

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

**NEW YORK
LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.
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1898**

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REPORT OF
JOHN D. ROBERTSON

INVESTIGATION OF THE
MURDER OF

JOHN D. ROBERTSON
BY
JOHN D. ROBERTSON

1900

1900

1900

1900



FIELD-MARSHAL
LORD ROBERTS
ON HIS
FAVOURITE ARAB CHARGER 'VONOLEL,'
1877-1896.

DECORATED BY SPECIAL PERMISSION OF HER MAJESTY THE
QUEEN WITH THE KABUL MEDAL WITH FOUR CLASPS,
AND THE KABUL-KANDAHAR STAR.

FROM
A SKETCH BY CHARLES FURSE,
MADE FROM AN INSTANTANEOUS PHOTOGRAPH.

FORTY-ONE YEARS IN INDIA.

CHAPTER XXXV.

IN the autumn of 1863, while we were preparing for the usual winter tour, Sir Hugh Rose, who had accompanied Lord Elgin on a trip through the hills, telegraphed to the Head-Quarters staff to join him at Mian Mir without delay.

The news which greeted us on our arrival was indeed disturbing. Lord Elgin was at Dharmasala in a dying condition, and the Chief had been obliged to leave him and push on to Lahore, in consequence of unsatisfactory reports from Brigadier-General Chamberlain, who was just then commanding an expedition which had been sent into the mountains near Peshawar, and had met with unexpected opposition. The civil authorities on the spot reported that there existed a great deal of excitement all along the border, that the tribes were collecting in large numbers, that emissaries from Kabul had appeared amongst them, and that, unless reinforcements could be sent up at once, the Government would be involved in a war which must inevitably lead to the most serious complications, not only on the frontier, but with Afghanistan.

In so grave a light did the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Robert Montgomery, view the position, that he contemplated the force being withdrawn and the undertaking abandoned.

Sir Hugh had had nothing to do with the despatch of this expedition; it had been decided on by the Government of India in consultation with the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. When the Commander-in-Chief was communicated with, he expressed himself adverse to the proposal, and placed his views at length before the Government, pointing out the inexpediency of entering a difficult and unknown country, unless the troops were properly equipped with transport, supplies, and reserve ammunition; that time did not permit of their being so equipped before the winter set in; and that, to provide a force of 5,000 men (the strength considered necessary by the Government), the frontier would have to be dangerously weakened. Moreover, he gave it as his opinion that it would be better to postpone operations until the spring, when everything could be perfectly arranged. Subsequent events proved how sound was this advice. But before proceeding with my narrative it will be as well to explain the circumstances which led the authorities to undertake this expedition.

In 1857, when all our resources were required to quell internal tumult, the Hindustani fanatics* took the oppor-

* In 1825 a religious adventurer from Bareilly made his appearance on the Yusafzai frontier with about forty Hindustani followers, and gave out that he was a man of superior sanctity, and had a divine command to wage a war of extermination, with the aid of all true believers, against the infidel. After studying Arabic at Delhi, he proceeded to Mecca by way of Calcutta, and during this journey his

tunity to stir up disturbances all along the Yusafzai frontier of the Peshawar district, and, aided by the rebel sepoys who had fled to them for protection, they made raids upon our border, and committed all kinds of atrocities. We were obliged, therefore, to send an expedition against them in 1858, which resulted in their being driven from their stronghold, Sitana, and in the neighbouring tribes being bound down to prevent their re-occupying that place. Three years later the fanatics returned to their former haunts and built up a new settlement at Malka; the old troubles recommenced, and for two years they had been allowed to go on raiding, murdering, and attacking our outposts with impunity. It was, therefore, quite time that measures should be taken to effectually rid the frontier of these disturbers of the peace, provided such measures could have been decided upon early enough in the year to ensure success.

The Punjab Government advocated the despatch of a very strong force. Accordingly, two columns were employed, the base of one being in the Peshawar valley, and that of the other in Hazara. The Peshawar column was to move by the Umbeyla Pass, the Buner frontier, and the Chamla valley, thus operating on the enemy's line of retreat. This route would not have been chosen, had not Chamberlain been assured by the civil authorities that no hostility need

doctrines had obtained so great an ascendancy over the minds of the Mahomedans of Bengal that they have ever since supplied the colony which Syad Ahmed Shah founded in Yusafzai with money and recruits. The Syad was eventually slain fighting against the Sikhs, but his followers established themselves at Sitana, and in the neighbourhood of that place they continue to flourish, notwithstanding that we have destroyed their settlements more than once during the last forty years.

be feared from the Bunerwals, even if their country had to be entered, as they had given no trouble for fifteen years, and their spiritual head, the Akhund of Swat,* had no sympathy with the fanatics. It was not, therefore, considered necessary to warn the Buner people of our approach until preparations were completed; indeed, it was thought unadvisable to do so, as it was important to keep the proposed line of advance secret. The strength of the force was 6,000 men, with 19 guns, but to make up these numbers the stations in Upper India had to be considerably weakened, and there was no reserve nearer than Lahore.

The Peshawar column† being all ready for a start, a Proclamation was forwarded to the Buner and other neighbouring tribes, informing them of the object of the expedition, and stating that there was no intention of interfering with them or their possessions.

On the following morning, the 20th October, the Umbeyla Pass was entered, and by noon the kotal‡ was reached

* The Akhund of Swat was a man of seventy years of age at the time of the Umbeyla expedition; he had led a holy life, and had gained such an influence over the minds of Mahomedans in general, that they believed he was supplied by supernatural means with the necessities of life, and that every morning, on rising from his prayers, a sum of money sufficient for the day's expenditure was found under his praying carpet.

† The Peshawar column consisted of half of 19th Company Royal Artillery, No. 8 Punjab Light Field Battery, the Peshawar and Hazara Mountain Batteries, the 71st and 101st Foot, the Guides, one troop 11th Bengal Lancers, one company Bengal Sappers and Miners, 14th Sikhs, 20th Punjab Infantry, 82nd Pioneers, 1st, 8rd, 5th and 6th Punjab Infantry, and 5th Gurkhas. The Hazara column consisted of a wing of the 51st Foot, 800 Native Cavalry, a regiment of Native Infantry and eight guns, holding Darband, Torbela, and Topi on the Indus.

‡ The highest point of a pass crossing a mountain range.

without any resistance to speak of ; but, from information brought in, it was evident that any further advance would be stoutly opposed. The road turned out to be much more difficult than had been anticipated, and the hurriedly collected transport proved unequal to the strain. Not a single baggage animal, except the ammunition mules, got up that night ; indeed, it was not until the morning of the 22nd—more than forty-eight hours after they started—that the rear guard reached the kotal, a distance of only six miles. As soon as it arrived Colonel Alex. Taylor, R.E., was sent off with a body of Cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel Probyn, to reconnoitre the road in front. The delay in reaching the top of the pass had given the tribes time to collect, and when the reconnoitring party entered the Chamla valley the Bunerwals could be seen about two miles and a half off, occupying in force the range which separates Buner from Chamla. Whatever may have been their first intention, they apparently could not resist the temptation to try and cut off this small body of Cavalry, for our horsemen on their return journey found a large number of the trusted Buner tribe attempting to block the mouth of the pass. A charge was made, but mounted men could not do much in such a hilly country ; the proceedings of the Bunerwals, however, had been observed from the kotal, and Major Brownlow,* with some of his own regiment (the 20th Punjab Infantry), was sent to the assistance of the party. A hand-to-hand fight ensued, and the enemy pressed our troops closely on their way back, coming right in amongst them with the utmost daring.

* Now General Sir Charles Brownlow, G.C.B.

There was now brought in to the Commissioner by a spy the copy of a letter from the Hindustani fanatics, addressed to the Bunerwals, telling them not to be taken in by our assurances that our only object was to punish the fanatics, for our real intentions were to annex Chamla, Buner, and Swat. This letter no doubt aroused the suspicions of the tribes, and, encouraged by the slowness of our movements, they all joined against us from Buner, Mahaban, and the Black Mountain.

On the 28rd large bodies of men with numerous standards were to be seen approaching the mouth of the pass, and a day or two later a report was received that our foes were to have the support of the Akhund of Swat, which meant a most formidable accession of moral as well as material strength, and put a stop, for the time being, to any possibility of a successful advance being made with the force at Chamberlain's disposal.

The position occupied by our troops was enclosed on the left (west) by the Guru Mountain, which separates Umbeyla from Buner, and on the right (east) by a range of hills, not quite so high. The main piquet on the Guru occupied a position above some precipitous cliffs known as the Eagle's Nest, while that on the right was designated the 'Crag piquet.' The Eagle's Nest was only large enough to accommodate 110 men, so 120 more were placed under the shelter of some rocks at its base, and the remainder of the troops told off for the defence of the left piquet were drawn up on and about a rocky knoll, 400 feet west of the Eagle's Nest.

Some 2,000 of the enemy occupied a breastwork on the crest of a spur of the Guru Mountain; and about noon on

the 26th they moved down, and with loud shouts attacked the Eagle's Nest. Their matchlock men posted themselves to the greatest advantage in a wood, and opened a galling fire upon our defences, while their swordsmen made a determined advance. The nature of the ground prevented our guns from being brought to bear upon the assailants, and they were thus able to get across the open space in front of the piquet, and plant their standards close under its parapet. For some considerable time they remained in this position, all our efforts to dislodge them proving of no avail. Eventually, however, they were forced to give way and were driven up the hill, leaving the ground covered with their dead, and a great many wounded, who were taken into our hospitals and carefully treated, while a still greater number were carried off by their friends. Our losses were, 2 British officers, 1 Native officer, and 26 men killed; and 2 British officers, 7 Native officers, and 86 men wounded.

The day following the fight the Bunerwals were told they might carry away their dead, and we took advantage of their acceptance of this permission to reason with them as to the uselessness of an unnecessary sacrifice of their tribesmen, which would be the certain result of further opposition to us. Their demeanour was courteous, and they conversed freely with General Chamberlain and Colonel Reynell Taylor, the Commissioner, but they made it evident that they were determined not to give in.

Our position had now become rather awkward; there was a combination against us of all the tribes between the Indus and the Kabul rivers, and their numbers could not be less than 15,000 armed men. Mutual animosities were

for the time allowed to remain in abeyance, and the tribes all flocked to fight under the Akhund's standard in the interests of their common faith. Moreover, there was trouble in the rear from the people along the Yusafzai border, who assisted the enemy by worrying our lines of communication. Under these changed conditions, and with such an inadequate force, Chamberlain came to the conclusion that, for the moment, he could only remain on the defensive, and trust to time, to the discouragement which repeated unsuccessful attacks were sure to produce on the enemy, and to the gradual decrease of their numbers, to break up the combination against us; for, as these tribesmen only bring with them the quantity of food they are able to carry, as soon as it is finished they are bound to suspend operations till more can be procured.

For three weeks almost daily attacks were made on our position; the enemy fought magnificently, some of them being killed inside our batteries, and twice they gained possession of the 'Crag piquet,' the key of the position, which it was essential should be retaken at all hazards. On the second occasion General Chamberlain himself led the attacking party, and was so severely wounded that he was obliged to relinquish the command of the force.

The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, being convinced that reinforcements were necessary, in consultation with Colonels Durand* and Norman (the Foreign and Military Secretaries, who had come to Lahore to meet the Viceroy), and without waiting for the sanction of the Commander-in-Chief, ordered to the frontier the three regiments which had

* The late Sir Henry Marion Durand, K.C.S.I., C.B., afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

been detailed for the Viceroy's camp,* as well as the 93rd Highlanders, then at Sialkot; and when Sir Hugh Rose on his arrival at Lahore heard of the heavy losses the expeditionary force had sustained, and of General Chamberlain being *hors de combat* from his wound, further reinforcements from every direction were hurried to the front. Subsequently, however, it became a question whether the troops should not be withdrawn altogether, and the punishment of the fanatics given up, the Government of India and the Punjab Government being completely in accord in favouring this view, while the Commissioner of Peshawar, Major James (who had succeeded Reynell Taylor),† and Sir Hugh Rose were as strongly opposed to a retrograde movement. The Commander-in-Chief pointed out to the Government that the loss of prestige and power we must sustain by retiring from the Umbeyla Pass would be more disastrous, both from a military and political point of view, than anything that could happen save the destruction of the force itself, and that General Chamberlain, on whose sound judgment he could rely, was quite sure that a retirement was unnecessary.

Unfortunately at this time the Viceroy died at Dharmasala, and the question remained in abeyance pending the arrival of Sir William Denison, Governor of Madras, who was coming round to take over the reins of Government until a successor to Lord Elgin should be sent from England.

In the meantime Sir Hugh Rose was most anxious to obtain exact information respecting our position at Umbeyla,

* 7th Royal Fusiliers, 28th Pioneers, and 24th Punjab Native Infantry.

† Reynell Taylor remained with the force as political officer.

the means of operating from it, the nature of the ground—in fact, all details which could only be satisfactorily obtained by sending someone to report on the situation, with whom he had had personal communication regarding the points about which he required to be enlightened. He therefore determined to despatch two officers on special service, whose duty it would be to put the Commander-in-Chief in possession of all the facts of the case; accordingly, Colonel Adye* (Deputy-Adjutant-General of Royal Artillery) and I were ordered to proceed to Umbeyla without delay.

Adye proved a most charming travelling companion, clever and entertaining, and I think we both enjoyed our journey. We reached the pass on the 25th November.

There had been no fighting for some days, and most of the wounded had been removed. Sir Neville Chamberlain was still in camp, and I was sorry to find him suffering greatly from his wound. We were much interested in going over the piquets and listening to the story of the different attacks made upon them, which had evidently been conducted by the enemy with as much skill as courage.† The loyalty of our Native soldiers struck me as

* General Sir John Adye, G.C.B.

† The expedition was an admirable school for training men in outpost duty. The Pathans and Gurkhas were quite at home at such work, and not only able to take care of themselves, but when stalked by the enemy were equal to a counter-stalk, often most successful. The enemy used to joke with Brownlow's and Keyes's men on these occasions, and say, 'We don't want you. Where are the *lal pagriwalas*? [as the 14th Sikhs were called from their *lal pagris* (red turbans)] or the *goralog* [the Europeans]? They are better *shikar* [sport]!' The tribesmen soon discovered that the Sikhs and Europeans, though full of fight, were very helpless on the hill-side, and could not keep their heads under cover.

having been most remarkable. Not a single desertion had occurred, although all the Native regiments engaged, with the exception of the Gurkhas and Punjab Pioneers, had amongst them members of the several tribes we were fighting, and many of our soldiers were even closely related to some of the hostile tribesmen ; on one occasion a young Buner sepoy actually recognized his own father amongst the enemy's dead when the fight was over.*

We listened to many tales of the gallantry of the British officers. The names of Brownlow, Keyes,† and Hughes‡ were on everyone's lips, and Brownlow's defence of the Eagle's Nest on the 26th October, and of the 'Crag piquet' on the 12th November, spoke volumes for his coolness and pluck, and for the implicit faith reposed in him by the men of the 20th Punjab Infantry, the regiment he had raised in 1857 when but a subaltern. In his official report the General remarked that 'to Major Brownlow's determination and personal example he attributed the preservation of the "Crag piquet."' And Keyes's recapture

* Colonel Reynell Taylor, whilst bearing like testimony to the good conduct of the Pathan soldiery, said the personal influence of officers will always be found to be the only stand-by for the Government interests when the religious cry is raised, and the fidelity of our troops is being tampered with. Pay, pensions, and orders of merit may, and would be, cast to the winds when the honour of the faith was in the scale ; but to snap the associations of years, and to turn in his hour of need against the man whom he has proved to be just and worthy, whom he has noted in the hour of danger, and praised as a hero to his family, is just what a Pathan will not do—to his honour be it said. The fact was that the officers in camp had been so long and kindly associated with their soldiers that the latter were willing to set them before their great religious teacher, the Akhund of Swat ('Records of Expeditions against the North-West Frontier Tribes').

† The late General Sir Charles Keyes, G.C.B.

‡ The late Major-General T. E. Hughes, C.B., Royal Artillery.

of the same piquet was described by Sir Neville as 'a most brilliant exploit, stamping Major Keyes as an officer possessing some of the highest military qualifications.' Brownlow and Keyes were both recommended for the Victoria Cross.

We (Adye and I) had no difficulty in making up our minds as to the course which ought to be taken. The column was daily being strengthened by the arrival of reinforcements, and although the combination of the tribesmen was still formidable, the enemy were showing signs of being disheartened by their many losses, and of a wish to come to terms.

Having consulted the civil and military authorities on the spot, we informed the Commander-in-Chief that they were of opinion a withdrawal would be most unwise, and that it was hoped that on the arrival of General Garvock* (Chamberlain's successor) an advance would be made into the Chamla valley, for there would then be a sufficient number of troops to undertake an onward move, as well as to hold the present position, which, as we told the Chief, was one of the strongest we had ever seen.

Sir William Denison reached Calcutta on the 2nd December. A careful study of the correspondence in connexion with the Umbeyla expedition satisfied him that the Commander-in-Chief's views were correct, and that a retirement would be unwise.

Sir Hugh Rose had previously requested to be allowed to personally conduct the operations, and in anticipation of the Government acceding to his request, he had sent a light camp to Hasan Abdal, from which place he intended to push on to Umbeyla; and with the object of collecting

* The late General Sir John Garvock, G.C.B.

troops near the frontier, where they would be available as a reserve should the expedition not be soon and satisfactorily settled, he desired me to select an encamping-ground between Rawal Pindi and Attock suitable for 10,000 men.

Leaving Adye in the pass, I started for Attock, where I spent three days riding about in search of a promising site for the camp. I settled upon a place near Hasan Abdal, which, however, was not in the end made use of. The people of the country were very helpful to me; indeed, when they heard I had been a friend of John Nicholson, they seemed to think they could not do enough for me, and delighted in talking of their old leader, whom they declared to be the greatest man they had ever known.

On my return I marched up the pass with the Rev. W. G. Cowie* and Probyn, who, with 400 Cavalry, had been ordered to the front to be in readiness for a move into the Chamla valley. James, the Commissioner, had been working to detach the Bunerwals from the combination against us, and on the afternoon of our arrival a deputation of their headmen arrived in camp, and before their departure the next morning they promised to accompany a force proceeding to destroy Malka, and to expel the Hindustani fanatics from the Buner country. Later, however, a messenger came in to say they could not fulfil their promise, being unable to resist the pressure brought to bear upon them by their co-religionists. The man further reported that large numbers of fresh tribesmen had appeared on the scene, and that it was intended to attack us on the 16th. He advised the Commissioner to take the

* Now Bishop of Auckland and Primate of New Zealand.

initiative, and gave him to understand that if we advanced the Bunerwals would stand aloof.

Sir Hugh Rose had been accorded permission to take command of the troops in the field, and had sent word to General Garvoek not 'to attempt any operations until further orders.' James, however, thinking that the situation demanded immediate action, as disturbances had broken out in other parts of the Peshawar valley, deprecated delay, and pressed Garvoek to advance, telling him that a successful fight would put matters straight. Garvoek consented to follow the Commissioner's advice, and arranged to move on the following day.

The force was divided into three columns. The first and second—consisting of about 4,800 men, and commanded respectively by Colonel W. Turner, C.B.,* and Lieutenant-Colonel Wilde, C.B.—were to form the attacking party, while the third, about 3,000 strong, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Vaughan,† was to be left for the protection of the camp.

At daybreak, on the 15th, the troops for the advance, unencumbered by tents or baggage, and each man carrying two days' rations, assembled at the base of the 'Crag piquet.' Turner, an excellent officer, who during the short time he had been at Umbeyla had inspired great confidence by his soldierly qualities, had on the previous afternoon reconnoitred to the right of the camp, and had discovered that about 4,000 men were holding the village of Lalu, from which it was necessary to dislodge them before Umbeyla could be attacked. On being told to advance,

* The late Brigadier-General Sir W. W. Turner, K.C.B.

† General Sir T. L. Vaughan, K.C.B.

therefore, Turner moved off in the direction of Lalu, and, driving the enemy's piquets before him, occupied the heights overlooking the valley, out of which rose, immediately in front about 200 yards off, a conical hill which hid Lalu from view. This hill, which was crowded with Hindustani fanatics and their Pathan allies, was a most formidable position; the sides were precipitous, and the summit was strengthened by *sangars*.* No further move could be made until the enemy were dislodged, so Turner lined the heights all round with his Infantry, and opened fire with his Mountain guns. Meanwhile, Wilde's column had cleared off the enemy from the front of the camp, and formed up on Turner's left. On the advance being sounded, Turner's Infantry rushed down the slopes, and in ten minutes could be seen driving the enemy from the heights on his right; at the same time the 101st Fusiliers, the leading regiment of Wilde's column, made straight for the top of the conical hill, and, under cover of the fire from the Mountain guns of both columns, and supported by the Guides and 28rd Pioneers, they climbed the almost perpendicular sides. When near the top a short halt was made to give the men time to get their breath; the signal being then given, amidst a shower of bullets and huge stones, the position was stormed, and carried at the point of the bayonet. It was a grand sight as Adye and I watched it from Hughes's battery; but we were considerably relieved when we perceived the enemy flying down the sides of the hill, and heard the cheers of the gallant Fusiliers as they stood victorious on the highest peak.

* Stone breastworks.

Now that the enemy were on the run it was the time to press them, and this Turner did so effectually that the leading men of his column entered Lalu simultaneously with the last of the fugitives. The rapidity of this movement was so unexpected that it threw the enemy inside the walls into confusion ; they made no stand, and were soon in full retreat towards Umbeyla and the passes leading into Buner.

While affairs were thus prospering on our right, the enemy, apparently imagining we were too busy to think of our left, came in large numbers from the village of Umbeyla, threatening the camp and the communications of the second column. Wilde, however, was prepared for them, and held his ground until reinforced by Turner, when he made a forward movement. The Guides, and detachments of the 5th Gurkhas and 3rd Sikhs, charged down one spur, and the 101st down another ; the enemy were driven off with great slaughter, leaving a standard in the hands of the Gurkhas, and exposing themselves in their flight to Turner's guns. During the day they returned, and, gathering on the heights, made several unsuccessful attacks upon our camp. At last, about 2 p.m., Brownlow, who was in command of the right defences, assumed the offensive, and, aided by Keyes, moved out of the breast-works and, by a succession of well-executed charges, completely cleared the whole front of the position, and drove the tribesmen with great loss into the plain below.

All opposition having now ceased, and the foe being in full retreat, the force bivouacked for the night. We had 16 killed and 67 wounded ; while our opponents admitted to 400 killed and wounded.

The next morning we were joined by Probyn with 200 sabres of the 11th Bengal Lancers and the same number of the Guides; and after a hasty breakfast the order was given to march into the Chamla valley. My duty was to accompany the Mountain batteries and show them the way. As we debouched into comparatively open country, the enemy appeared on a ridge which completely covered our approach to Umbeyla, and we could descry many standards flying on the most prominent points. The road was so extremely difficult that it was half-past two o'clock before the whole force was clear of the hills.

General Garvock, having made a careful reconnoissance of the enemy's position, which was of great strength and peculiarly capable of defence, had decided to turn their right, a movement which was to be entrusted to the second column, and I was told to inform Turner that he must try and cut them off from the Buner Pass as they retreated. I found Turner close to Umbeyla and delivered my message. He moved forward at once with the 23rd Pioneers and a wing of the 32nd Pioneers in line, supported by the second wing, having in reserve a wing of the 7th Royal Fusiliers.

When we had passed the village of Umbeyla, which was in flames, having been set fire to by our Cavalry, the wing of the 32nd was brought up in prolongation of our line to the right. The advance was continued to within about 800 yards of the Buner Pass, when Turner, observing a large body of the enemy threatening his left flank, immediately sent two companies of the Royal Fusiliers in that direction. Just at that moment a band of *Ghazis* furiously

attacked the left flank, which was at a disadvantage, having got into broken ground covered with low jungle. In a few seconds five of the Pioneer British officers were on the ground, one killed and four wounded; numbers of the men were knocked over, and the rest, staggered by the suddenness of the onslaught, fell back on their reserve, where they found the needed support, for the Fusiliers stood as firm as a rock. At the critical moment when the *Ghazis* made their charge, Wright, the Assistant-Adjutant-General, and I, being close by, rushed in amongst the Pioneers and called on them to follow us; as we were personally known to the men of both regiments, they quickly pulled themselves together and responded to our efforts to rally them. It was lucky they did so, for had there been any delay or hesitation, the enemy, who thronged the slopes above us, would certainly have come down in great numbers, and we should have had a most difficult task. As it was, we were entirely successful in repulsing the *Ghazis*, not a man of whom escaped. We counted 200 of the enemy killed; our losses were comparatively slight—8 killed and 80 wounded.

We bivouacked for the night near the village of Umbeyla, and the next morning the Bunerwals, who, true to their word, had taken no part in the fighting on the 15th or 16th, came in and made their submission.

The question which now had to be decided was, whether a force fully equipped and strong enough to overcome all opposition should be sent to destroy the fanatic settlement of Malka, or whether the work of annihilation should be entrusted to the Bunerwals, witnessed by British officers. The latter course was eventually adopted, chiefly on account of the delay which provisioning a brigade would entail—a

delay which the Commissioner was anxious to avoid—for although for the present the combination had broken up, and most of the tribesmen were dispersing to their homes, the Akhund of Swat and his followers were still hovering about in the neighbourhood, and inaction on our part would in all probability have led to a fresh gathering and renewed hostilities.

The terms which were drawn up, and to which the Bunerwals agreed, were :

The breaking-up of the tribal gathering in the Buner Pass.

The destruction of Malka ; those carrying out the work to be accompanied by British officers and such escort as might be considered necessary by us.

The expulsion of the Hindustanis from the Buner, Chamla, and Amazai countries.

And, finally, it was stipulated that the headmen of their tribe should be left as hostages until such time as these requirements should have been fulfilled.

On the afternoon of Saturday, the 19th December, the little party of British officers who were to witness the destruction of Malka assembled at Umbeyla. Its members were Reynell Taylor (who was in charge), Alex. Taylor (Commanding Engineer), two Survey officers, Wright, Adye, and myself. Twenty-five Cavalry and 4 companies of the Guides Infantry, under four officers, formed our escort, and it had been arranged that we were to be accompanied by four leading Buner Khans, with 2,000 followers, who would be responsible for our safety, and destroy the fanatics' stronghold in our presence. Rain was falling heavily, but as all our arrangements had been made, and delay was

considered undesirable, it was settled that we should make a start. It was rough travelling, and it was almost dark when we reached Muria, only eight miles on our way, where we halted for the night, and where we had to remain the next day, as the Bunerwals declared they could not continue the journey until they had come to an understanding with the Amazais, in whose territory Malka was situated.

We had noticed on leaving Umbeyla that, instead of 2,000 Bunerwals, there were only about sixty or seventy at the most, and in reply to our repeated questions as to what had become of the remainder, we were told they would join us later on. It soon became evident, however, that no more were coming, and that the Khans thought it wiser to trust to their own influence with the Amazais rather than to intimidation.

We made a fresh start on the morning of the 21st. Malka was only twelve miles off, but the way was so difficult, and our guides stopped so often to consult with the numerous bands of armed men we came across, that it was sunset before we arrived at our destination.

Malka was perched on a spur of the Mahabun mountain, some distance below its highest peak. It was a strong, well-built place, with accommodation for about 1,500 people. The Amazais did not attempt to disguise their disgust at our presence in their country, and they gathered in knots, scowling and pointing at us, evidently discussing whether we should or should not be allowed to return.

The next morning Malka was set on fire, and the huge column of smoke which ascended from the burning village, and was visible for miles round, did not tend to allay the ill-feeling so plainly displayed. The Native officers of

the Guides warned us that delay was dangerous, as the people were becoming momentarily more excited, and were vowing we should never return. It was no use, however, to attempt to make a move without the consent of the tribesmen, for we were a mere handful compared to the thousands who had assembled around Malka, and we were separated from our camp by twenty miles of most difficult country. Our position was no doubt extremely critical, and it was well for us that we had at our head such a cool, determined leader as Reynell Taylor. I greatly admired the calm, quiet manner in which he went up and spoke to the headmen, telling them that, the object of our visit having been accomplished, we were ready to retrace our steps. At this the Amazais became still further excited. They talked in loud tones, and gesticulated in true Pathan fashion, thronging round Taylor, who stood quite alone and perfectly self-possessed in the midst of the angry and dangerous-looking multitude. At this crisis the Bunerwals came to our rescue. The most influential of the tribe, a grey-bearded warrior, who had lost an eye and an arm in some tribal contest, forced his way through the rapidly increasing crowd to Taylor's side, and, raising his one arm to enjoin silence, delivered himself as follows: 'You are hesitating whether you will allow these English to return unmolested. You can, of course, murder them and their escort; but if you do, you must kill us Bunerwals first, for we have sworn to protect them, and we will do so with our lives.' This plucky speech produced a quieting effect, and taking advantage of the lull in the storm, we set out on our return journey; but evidently the tribesmen did not consider the question finally or satisfactorily settled, for they followed us

the whole way to Kuria. The slopes of the hills on both sides were covered with men. Several times we were stopped while stormy discussions took place, and once, as we were passing through a narrow defile, an armed Amazai, waving a standard above his head, rushed down towards us. Fortunately for us, he was stopped by some of those less inimically disposed; for if he had succeeded in inciting anyone to fire a single shot, the desire for blood would quickly have spread, and in all probability not one of our party would have escaped.

On the 23rd December we reached our camp in the Umbeyla Pass, when the force, which had only been kept there till our return, retired to the plains and was broken up.

During my absence at Umbeyla my wife remained with friends at Mian Mir for some time, and then made her way to Peshawar, where I joined her on Christmas Day. She spent one night *en route* in Sir Hugh Rose's camp at Hasan Abdal, and found the Chief in great excitement and very angry at such a small party having been sent to Malka, and placed at the mercy of the tribes. He did not know that my wife had arrived, and in passing her tent she heard him say: 'It was madness, and not one of them will ever come back alive.' She was of course dreadfully frightened. As soon as Sir Hugh heard she was in camp, he went to see her, and tried to soften down what he knew she must have heard; but he could not conceal his apprehension; and my poor wife's anxiety was terrible, for she did not hear another word till the morning of the day I returned to her.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

EARLY in the New Year (1864) Sir Hugh Rose, with the Head-Quarters camp, marched into Peshawar, where we remained until the middle of February. The time was chiefly spent in inspections, parades, and field-days, varied by an occasional run with the hounds. The hunting about Peshawar was very fair, and we all, the Chief included, got a great deal of fun out of our small pack.

On the 25th January a full-dress parade was held to announce to the garrison that Sir John Lawrence had been appointed Viceroy of India, and soon afterwards we left Peshawar and began our return march to Simla.

We changed our house this year and took one close to the Stewarts, an arrangement for which I was very thankful later, when my wife had a great sorrow in the death of her sister, Mrs. Sladen, at Peshawar. It was everything for her at such a time to have a kind and sympathizing friend close at hand, when I was engaged with my work and could be very little with her during the day. At this time, as at all others, Sir Hugh Rose was a most considerate friend to us; he placed his house at Mashobra at my wife's disposal, thus providing her with a quiet resort which she frequently made use of and which she learned to love as

much that, when I returned to Simla as Commander-in-Chief, her first thought was to secure this lovely 'Retreat' as a refuge from the (sometimes) slightly trying gaiety of Simla.

The Commander-in-Chief was good enough to send in my name for a brevet for the Umbeyla expedition, but the Viceroy refused to forward the recommendation, for the reason that I was 'too junior to be made a Lieutenant-Colonel.' I was then thirty-two!

Throughout the whole of 1864 I was more or less ill; the office work (which never suited me quite as well as more active employment) was excessive, for, in addition to the ordinary routine, I had undertaken to revise the 'Bengal Route-Book,' which had become quite obsolete, having been compiled in 1837, when Kurnal was our frontier station. A voyage round the Cape was still considered the panacea for all Indian ailments, and the doctors strongly advised my taking leave to England, and travelling by that route.

We left Simla towards the end of October, and, after spending the next three months in Calcutta, where I was chiefly employed in taking up transports and superintending the embarkation of troops returning to England, I was given the command of a batch of 300 time-expired men on board the *Renown*, one of Green's frigate-built ships which was chartered for their conveyance. Two hundred of the men belonged to the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the Rifle Brigade, the remainder to the Artillery and various other corps; they had all been twelve years in the army, and most of them were decorated for service in the Crimea and Indian Mutiny.

At the inspection parade before we embarked, a certain number of men were brought up for punishment for various offences committed on the way down country; none of the misdemeanours appeared to me very serious, so I determined to let the culprits off. I told the men that we had now met for the first time and I was unwilling to commence our acquaintance by awarding punishments; we had to spend three or four months together, and I hoped they would show, by their good behaviour while under my command, that I had not made a mistake in condoning their transgressions. The officers seemed somewhat surprised at my action in this matter, but I think it was proved by the men's subsequent conduct that I had not judged them incorrectly, for they all behaved in quite an exemplary manner throughout the voyage.

We had been on board more than six weeks, when one of the crew was attacked by small-pox—an untoward circumstance in a crowded ship. The sailor was placed in a boat which was hung over the ship's side, and a cabin-boy, the marks on whose face plainly showed that he had already suffered badly from the disease, was told off to look after him. The man recovered, and there was no other case. Shortly before we reached St. Helena, scurvy appeared amongst the troops, necessitating lime-juice being given in larger quantities, but what proved a more effectual remedy was water-cress, many sacks of which were laid in before we left the island.

On the 29th May, 1865, we sighted the 'Lizard,' and took a pilot on board, who brought with him a few newspapers, which confirmed the tidings signalled to us by an American ship that the war between the Federals

and Confederates was at an end. How eagerly we scanned the journals, after having heard nothing from home for four months, but the only piece of news we found of personal interest to ourselves was that my father had been made a K.C.B.

On the 30th May we reached Portsmouth, and landed between two showers of snow! I had a final parade of the men before leaving the ship, and I was quite sorry to say good-bye to them; some of the poor fellows were already beginning to be anxious about their future, and to regret that their time with the colours was over.

My father, mother, and sister came up to London to meet us, very little changed since I had left them six years before. I remained in England till March, 1866, when I returned to India, leaving my wife behind to follow in the autumn.

While I was at home, Sir Hugh Rose's term of the chief command in India came to an end, and his place had been taken by Sir William Mansfield. On my arrival in Calcutta, I received orders to join the Allahabad division, and thither I proceeded. In October I went to Calcutta to meet my wife and take her to Allahabad, where we remained for nearly a year, her first experience of a hot season in the plains, and a very bad one it was. Cholera was rife; the troops had to be sent away into camps, more or less distant from the station, all of which had to be visited once, if not twice, daily; this kept me pretty well on the move from morning till night. It was a sad time for everyone. People we had seen alive and well one day were dead and buried the next; and in the midst of all

this sorrow and tragedy, the most irksome—because such an incongruous—part of our experience was that we had constantly to get up entertainments, penny readings, and the like, to amuse the men and keep their minds occupied, for if once soldiers begin to think of the terrors of cholera, they are seized with panic, and many get the disease from pure fright.

My wife usually accompanied me to the cholera camps, preferring to do this rather than be left alone at home. On one occasion, I had just got into our carriage after going round the hospital, when a young officer ran after us to tell me a corporal in whom I had been much interested was dead. The poor fellow's face was blue; the cholera panic had evidently seized him, and I said to my wife, 'He will be the next.' I had no sooner reached home than I received a report of his having been seized.

We were fortunate in having at Allahabad as Chaplain the present Bishop of Lahore, who, with his wife, had only lately come to India; they never wearied in doing all that was possible for the soldiers. Bishop Matthew is still one of our closest friends; his good, charming, and accomplished wife, alas! died some years ago.

We remained at Allahabad until August, 1867, when we heard that a brigade from Bengal was likely to be required to take part in an expedition which would probably be sent from Bombay to Abyssinia for the relief of some Europeans whom the King, Theodore, had imprisoned, and that the Mountain battery, on the strength of which my name was still borne, would in such case be employed. I therefore thought I had better go to Simla, see the authorities, and arrange for rejoining my battery, if the rumour turned out

to be true. The cholera had now disappeared, so I was at liberty to take leave, and we both looked forward to a cooler climate and a change to brighter scenes after the wretched experience we had been through. On my arrival at Simla I called upon the Commander-in-Chief and told him that, if my battery was sent on service, I wished to join it and was quite ready to resign my staff appointment.

Sir William Mansfield was particularly kind in his reception of me, from which I augured well; but I could learn nothing definite, and it was not until quite the end of September that it was announced that Colonel Donald Stewart was to have command of the Bengal Brigade with the Abyssinian Force, and that I was to be his Assistant-Quartermaster-General. We at once hastened back to Allahabad, where we only remained long enough to pack up what we wanted to take with us, and arrange for the disposal of our property; thence we proceeded to Calcutta, where, for the next two months, I had a busy time taking up transports and superintending the equipment of the force.

I had often read and heard of the difficulties and delays experienced by troops landing in a foreign country, in consequence of their requirements not being all shipped in the same vessels with themselves—men in one ship, camp equipage in another, transport and field hospital in a third, or perhaps the mules in one and their pack-saddles in another; and I determined to try and prevent these mistakes upon this occasion. With Stewart's approval, I arranged that each detachment should embark complete in every detail, which resulted in the troops

being landed and marched off without the least delay as each vessel reached its destination.*

We were living with the Stewarts in the Commander-in-Chief's quarters in Fort William, which His Excellency had placed at our disposal for the time being. On the 1st November Calcutta was visited by the second cyclone within my experience. We had arranged to go to the opera that evening, but when it was time to start the wind was so high that there seemed every chance of the carriage being blown over before we could get there, so we decided not to attempt it. It was well we did, for the few adventurous spirits who struggled through the storm had the greatest difficulty in getting back to their homes. The opera-house was unroofed before the performance was half over, and very little of the building remained standing the next day. At bedtime we still thought it was only a bad storm, but towards midnight the wind increased to an

* The average strength of the regiments was as follows: 10th and 12th Bengal Cavalry, each 9 British officers, 18 Native officers, 450 non-commissioned officers and men, 8 Native doctors, 489 horses, 822 mules, 590 followers. 21st and 28rd Punjab Infantry, each 9 British officers, 16 Native officers, 786 non-commissioned officers and men, 8 Native doctors, 10 horses, 850 mules, 400 followers. I found that six ships were required for the conveyance of a Cavalry and four for that of an Infantry regiment; for the Mountain battery three ships were necessary, and for the coolie corps (1,550 strong) four; in all twenty-seven ships, besides nine tugs. In selecting ships, care was taken to secure those intended for Artillery or Cavalry as high 'tween-decks as possible; a sufficient number of these were procurable at Calcutta, either iron clippers from Liverpool or large North American built traders, with decks varying from 7 feet 6 inches to 8 feet 2 inches high. I gave the preference to wooden ships, as being cooler and more easily ventilated. The vessels taken up were each from 1,000 to 1,400 tons, averaging in length from 150 to 200 feet, with a beam varying from 80 to 85 feet, and usually they had a clear upper deck, where from forty to fifty animals were accommodated.

alarming extent, and my wife awoke me, and begged me to get up, as the windows were being burst open and deluges of rain coming in. Stewart and I tried to reclose the windows, but the thick iron bars had been bent in two and forced out of their sockets; a heavy oak plate-chest and boxes, which we with much difficulty dragged across the windows, were blown into the middle of the dining-room, like so much cardboard, and the whole place was gradually flooded. We were driven out of each room in turn, till at length we all took refuge in a small box room, about ten feet wide, right in the middle of the house, where we remained the rest of the night and 'hoped for the day.'

Towards morning the wind abated, but what a scene of desolation was that upon which we emerged! The rooms looked as if they could never be made habitable again, and much of our property was floating about in a foot of water.

My first thought was for the shipping, and I hurried down to the river to see how my transports had fared. Things were much better than I expected to find them—only two had been damaged. Most fortunately the cyclone, having come from a different direction, was not accompanied by a storm-wave such as that which worked so much mischief amongst the shipping on a former occasion, but the destruction on land was even greater: all the finest trees were torn up by the roots, a great part of the Native bazaar was levelled, and lay from two to three feet deep in water, while many houses were wholly or partly demolished. We came across most curious sights when driving round Calcutta in the evening;

some of the houses were divided clean down the centre, one half crumbled into a heap of ruins, the other half still standing and displaying, as in a doll's house, the furniture in the different stories.

The work of filling up and loading the vessels was greatly retarded, owing to a large number of cargo boats having been sunk, consequently it was the 5th December before the first transport got off; from that date the others started in quick succession, and on the 9th January, 1868, Stewart and his staff left Calcutta in the P. and O. steamer *Golconda*. The officers and men of the Mountain battery were also on board, Captain Bogle in command, my friend Jemmy Hills in my place as second Captain, and Collen* and Disney as subalterns. Mrs. Stewart and my wife accompanied us as far as Aden, where they were left to the kind care of Major-General Russell,† commanding there at the time, until the arrival of the mail-steamer in which they were to proceed to England.

On the 3rd February we anchored in Annesley Bay and landed at Zula.

* Now Major-General Sir Edwin Collen, K.C.I.E., Military Member of the Governor-General's Council.

† Now General Sir Edward Lechmere Russell, K.C.S.I.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

It will, perhaps, be as well to recall to the reader's mind that the object of the expedition in which we were taking part was to rescue some sixty Europeans, who, from one cause or another, had found their way to Abyssinia, and been made prisoners by the King of that country. Amongst these were four English officials, Mr. Rassam, and Captain Cameron, who had at different times been the bearers of letters from Queen Victoria to King Theodore, and Lieutenant Prideaux and Dr. Blanc of the Bombay Army; the rest were chiefly French and German missionaries, and artisans, with their wives and children. The prisoners were confined in a fort built on the Magdāla plateau, 9,150 feet above sea-level, and 379 miles inland from Annesley Bay.

The repeated demands of the British Government for the restoration of the prisoners having been treated with contemptuous silence by the King, Colonel Merewether, the Political Agent at Aden, who in July, 1867, had been directed to proceed to Massowa and endeavour to obtain the release of the captives, and to make inquiries and collect information in case of an expedition having to be sent, reported to the Secretary of State that he had failed to communicate with the King, and urged the advisability

of immediate measures being taken to prepare a force in India for the punishment of Theodore and the rescue of the prisoners. Colonel Merewether added that in Abyssinia the opinion had become very general that England knew herself to be too weak to resent insult, and that amongst the peoples of the neighbouring countries, even so far as Aden, there was a feeling of contemptuous surprise at the continued long-suffering endurance of the British Government.

On receipt of this communication, Her Majesty's Government, having exhausted all their resources for the preservation of peace, decided to send an expedition from India under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Robert Napier, the Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army. After carefully considering the distance along which operations would have to be prosecuted, and the necessity for holding a number of detached posts, Napier gave it as his opinion that the force should consist of not less than 12,000 men.*

Profiting by the experience of the Crimean war, the Government was determined that the mobility of the force should not be hampered by want of food and clothing. Stores of all descriptions were despatched in unstinted quantities from England, and three of the steamers in which they were conveyed were fitted up as hospital ships. But food, clothing, and stores, however liberally supplied, would not take the army to Magdāla without transport.

* The numbers actually despatched from India were 18,548, of whom 8,786 were Europeans. In addition, a company of Royal Engineers was sent from England.

The question as to the most suitable organization for the Land Transport Corps occupied a good deal of Sir Robert Napier's attention while the expedition was being fitted out, and caused a considerable amount of correspondence between him and the Bombay Government. The Commissary-General wished to keep the corps under his own orders, and objected to its being given an entirely military organization. Sir Robert Napier preferred to establish the corps on an independent basis, but was at first overruled by the Bombay Government. While acting in accordance with their orders, the Commander-in-Chief wrote: 'I believe that the success of systems depends more on the men who work them than on the systems themselves; but I cannot accept without protest a decision to throw such a body of men as the drivers of our transport animals will be (if we get them) on an expedition in a foreign country without a very complete organization to secure order and discipline.' Eventually Sir Robert got his own way, but much valuable time had been lost, and the corps was organized on too small a scale;* the officers and non-commissioned officers were not sent to Zula in sufficient time or in sufficient numbers to take charge of the transport animals as they arrived.

A compact, properly-supervised train of 2,600 mules, with serviceable, well-fitting pack-saddles, was sent from the Punjab; and from Bombay came 1,400 mules and ponies and 5,600 bullocks, but these numbers proving altogether inadequate to the needs of the expedition, they were

* At first it was thought that 10,000 mules, with a coolie corps 8,000 strong, would suffice, but before the expedition was over it was found necessary to purchase 18,000 mules, 1,500 ponies, 1,800 donkeys, 12,000 camels, and 8,400 bullocks.

supplemented by animals purchased in Persia, Egypt, and on the shores of the Mediterranean. The men to look after them were supplied from the same sources, but their number, even if they had been efficient, was insufficient, and they were a most unruly and unmanageable lot. They demanded double the pay for which they had enlisted, and struck work in a body because their demand was not at once complied with. They refused to take charge of the five mules each man was hired to look after, and when that number was reduced to three, they insisted that one should be used as a mount for the driver. But the worst part of the whole organization, or, rather, want of organization, was that there had been no attempt to fit the animals with pack-saddles, some of which were sent from England, some from India, and had to be adjusted to the mules after they had been landed in Abyssinia, where there was not an establishment to make the necessary alterations. The consequence was that the wretched animals became cruelly galled, and in a few weeks a large percentage were unfit for work, and had to be sent to the sick depot.

Other results of having no properly arranged transport train, and no supervision or discipline, were that mules were lost or stolen, starved for want of food, or famished from want of water. The condition of the unfortunate animals was such that, though they had been but a few weeks in the country, when they were required to proceed to Senafe, only sixty-seven miles distant, a very small proportion were able to accomplish the march; hundreds died on the way, and their carcasses, quickly decomposing in the hot sun, became a fruitful source of dangerous disease to the force.

On arrival at Zula, we were told that Sir Robert Napier was at Senafe, the first station in the Hills, and the advanced depot for supplies. We of the Bengal brigade were somewhat disconcerted at the orders which awaited us, from which we learned that our brigade was to be broken up; the troops were to proceed to the front; while Stewart was to take command at Senafe, and I myself was to remain at Zula, as senior staff officer. The disappointment was great, but, being the last-comer, I had no unfairness to complain of, and I had plenty to do. I spent the greater part of each day amongst the shipping, superintending the embarkation and disembarkation of men, animals, and stores.

Zula was not an attractive place of residence. The heat was intense—117° in the daytime in my tent. The allowance of fresh water was extremely limited,* while the number of scorpions was quite the reverse, and the food, at the best, was not appetizing. Few who remained there as long as I did escaped scurvy and horrible boils or sores. I was fortunate, however, in finding in charge of the transport arrangements afloat, my old friend and Eton schoolfellow, George Tryon,† to whom I owed many a good dinner, and, what I appreciated even more, many a refreshing bath on board the *Euphrates*, a transport belonging to the British India Steam Navigation Company which had been fitted up for Captain Tryon and his staff. Indeed, all the officers of the Royal Navy were most helpful and kind, and I have a very pleasant recollection of the

* Fresh water was obtained by condensing the sea-water; there were few condensers, and no means of aerating the water.

† The late Admiral Sir George Tryon, K.C.B.

hospitality I received from Commodore Heath* and those serving under him.

During the four months I remained at Zula, Tryon and I were constantly together, and I had plenty of opportunity for observing the masterly manner in which he could grasp a situation, his intimate knowledge of detail, and the strong hold he had over all those working with him, not only the officers of the Royal Navy, but also the commanders of the merchant vessels taken up as transports, and lying in Annesley Bay.

On the 17th April news reached us that four days before Sir Robert Napier had successfully attacked Magdāla and released the prisoners, having experienced but very slight opposition; and that King Theodore, deserted by his army, which had apparently become tired of his brutalities, had committed suicide.† A few days later Major-General Russell, who had come from Aden to take over the command at Zula, received orders to prepare for the embarkation of the force. Arrangements were accordingly made to enable regiments and batteries to be embarked on board the transports told off for them directly they arrived from the front—a matter of the utmost importance, both on account of the fearful heat at Zula, and the absence of a sufficient water-supply.

On the 2nd June the Commander-in-Chief returned to Zula and on the 10th he embarked on board the old Indian Marine steamer *Feroze* for Suez. Sir Robert was good enough to ask me to accompany him, as he wished to

* Now Admiral Sir Leopold Heath, K.C.B.

† He is said to have killed in one month, or burnt alive, more than 8,000 people. He pillaged and burnt the churches at Gondur, and had many priests and young girls cast alive into the flames.

make me the bearer of his final despatches. My work was ended, the troops had all left, and as I was pretty well knocked up, I felt extremely grateful for the offer, and very proud of the great honour the Chief proposed to confer upon me.

We reached Alexandria on the 20th June, and the next day I started in the mail-steamer for Brindisi, arriving in London on the evening of Sunday, the 28th. I received a note at my club from Edwin Johnson (who was at that time Assistant Military Secretary to H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge), directing me to take the despatches without delay to the Secretary of State for India. I found Sir Stafford and Lady Northcote at dinner; Sir Stafford looked through the despatches, and when he had finished reading them, he asked me to take them without delay to the Commander-in-Chief, as he knew the Duke was most anxious to see them. There was a dinner-party, however, that night at Gloucester House, and the servant told me it was quite impossible to disturb His Royal Highness; so, placing my card on the top of the despatches, I told the man to deliver them at once, and went back to my club. I had scarcely reached it, when the Duke's Aide-de-camp made his appearance and told me that he had been ordered to find me and take me back with him. The Commander-in-Chief received me very kindly, expressing regret that I had been sent away in the first instance; and Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, who were present, were most gracious, and asked many questions about the Abyssinian Expedition.

The next day I joined my wife, who was staying with my people at Clifton, and on the 14th August, when the

rewards for the Abyssinian Expedition were published, my name appeared for a brevet Lieutenant-Colonelcy.

I was now anxious to ascertain in what manner I was to be employed. My five years as A.Q.M.G. were about to expire, and I thought I should like to go back to my regiment for a time. I therefore applied for the command of a battery of Horse Artillery. I was told, in answer to my application, that it was not the custom to appoint an officer who had been in staff employment for some time to the mounted branch, but that, in consideration of my services, the Duke of Cambridge was pleased to make an exception in my favour. I was posted to a battery at Meerut, and warned to be ready to start in an early troopship. Before the time for our departure arrived, however, I received a letter from Lumsden, who had now become Quartermaster-General, informing me that the Commander-in-Chief had recommended, and the Government had approved of, the formation of a fresh grade—that of First A.Q.M.G.—and that he was directed by Sir William Mansfield to offer the new appointment to me—an offer which I gratefully accepted; for though the command of a Horse Artillery battery would have been most congenial, this unexpected chance of five years' further staff employ was too good to be refused.

On the 4th January, 1869, having said good-bye to those dear to us, two of whom I was never to see again, my wife and I, with a baby girl who was born the previous July, embarked at Portsmouth on board the s.s. *Helvetia*, which had been taken up for the conveyance of troops to Bombay, the vessel of the Royal Navy in which we were to have sailed having suddenly broken down. The *Helvetia* proved

most unsuitable as a transport, and uncomfortable to the last degree for passengers, besides which it blew a gale the whole way to Alexandria. We were all horribly ill, and our child caught a fatal cold. We thoroughly appreciated a change at Suez to the Indian trooper, the *Malabar*, where everything possible was done for our comfort by our kind captain (Rich, R.N.), and, indeed, by everyone on board; but, alas! our beautiful little girl never recovered the cruel experience of the *Helvetia*, and we had the terrible grief of losing her soon after we passed Aden. She was buried at sea.

It was a very sad journey after that. There were several nice, kind people amongst our fellow-passengers; but life on board ship at such a time, surrounded by absolute strangers, was a terrible trial to us both, and, what with the effects of the voyage and the anxiety and sorrow she had gone through, my wife was thoroughly ill when we arrived at Simla towards the end of February.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IN January, 1869, Sir John Lawrence, after a career which was altogether unique, he having risen from the junior grades of the Bengal Civil Service to the almost regal position of Governor-General,* left India for good. He was succeeded as Viceroy by Lord Mayo, one of whose first official acts was to hold a durbar at Umballa for the reception of the Amir Sher Ali, who, after five years of civil war, had succeeded in establishing himself on the throne of Afghanistan, to which he had been nominated by his father, Dost Mahomed Khan.†

* I should have mentioned that Sir John Lawrence was not the only instance of a Bengal civilian rising to the position of Governor-General, as a predecessor of his, Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, was appointed Governor-General in 1792, and held that office until 1798.

† Dost Mahomed had several sons. Mahomed Akbar and Ghulam Haidar, the two heirs-designate in succession, died before their father. Sixteen other sons were alive in 1868, of whom the following were the eldest:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Mahomed Afzal Khan, aged 52 years | } | By a wife not of
Royal blood. |
| 2. Mahomed Azim Khan, „ 45 „ | | |
| 3. Sher Ali Khan „ 40 „ | } | By a favourite
Popalzai wife. |
| 4. Mahomed Amir Khan „ 84 „ | | |
| 5. Mahomed Sharif Khan „ 80 „ | | |
| 6. Wali Mahomed Khan „ 88 „ | } | By a third wife. |
| 7. Faiz Mahomed Khan „ 25 „ | | |

Afzal Khan had a son Abdur Rahman Khan, the present Amir of Afghanistan, and Sher Ali had five sons—Ali Khan, Yakub Khan, Ibrahim Khan, Ayub Khan, and Abdula Jan.

Sher Ali had passed through a stormy time between the death of the Dost, in June, 1868, and September, 1868. He had been acknowledged as the rightful heir by the Government of India, and for the first three years he held the Amirship in a precarious sort of way. His two elder brothers, Afzal and Azim, and his nephew, Abdur Rahman (the present ruler of Afghanistan), were in rebellion against him. The death of his favourite son and heir-apparent, Ali Khan, in action near Khelat-i-Ghilzai, in 1865, grieved him so sorely that for a time his reason was affected. In May, 1866, he was defeated near Ghazni (mainly owing to the treachery of his own troops) by Abdur Rahman, who, releasing his father, Afzal, from the prison into which he had been cast by Sher Ali, led him in triumph to Kabul, and proclaimed him Amir of Afghanistan.

The new Amir, Afzal, at once wrote to the Government of India detailing what had occurred, and expressing a hope that the friendship of the British, which he so greatly valued, would be extended to him. He was told, in reply, that the Government recognized him as Ruler of Kabul, but that, as Sher Ali still held Kandahar and Herat, existing engagements with the latter could not be broken off. The evident preference thus displayed for Sher Ali caused the greatest vexation to the brothers Afzal and Azim, who showed their resentment by directing an Envoy who had come from Swat to pay his respects to the new Amir to return to his own country and set on foot a holy war against the English; the Waziri *maliks** in attendance at the court were dismissed with presents and direc-

* The headmen of villages in Afghanistan are styled *maliks*.

tions to harass the British frontier, while an emissary was despatched on a secret mission to the Russians.

After his defeat near Ghazni, Sher Ali fled to Kandahar, and in the January of the following year (again owing to treachery in his army) he met with a second defeat near Khelat-i-Ghilzai, and lost Kandahar.

On this fact being communicated to the Government of India, Afzal Khan was in his turn recognized as Amir of Kabul and Kandahar. But he was at the same time informed that the British Government intended to maintain a strict neutrality between the contending parties in Afghanistan. John Lawrence, in his letter of the 20th of February, said that 'neither men, nor arms, nor money, nor assistance of any kind, have ever been supplied by my Government to Amir Sher Ali. Your Highness and he, both equally unaided by me, have fought out the battle, each upon your own resources. I purpose to continue the same policy for the future. If, unhappily, the struggle for supremacy in Afghanistan has not yet been brought to a close, and hostilities are again renewed, I shall still side with neither party.'

This reply altogether failed to satisfy Afzal and Azim. They answered it civilly, but at the same time they sent a copy of it to General Romanofski, the Russian Governor of Tashkent, who was informed by the new Amir that he had no confidence in the 'Lord *sahib's* fine professions of friendship, and that he was disgusted with the British Government for the ingratitude and ill-treatment shown towards his brother Azim.* He looked upon the Russians

* Azim Khan behaved well towards the Lumden Mission, and it was reported that he encouraged his father, Dost Mahomed Khan, not to disturb the Peshawar frontier during the Mutiny.

as his real and only friends, hoped soon to send a regular Ambassador to the Russian camp, and would at all times do his utmost to protect and encourage Russian trade.'

In October of this year (1867) Afzal Khan died, and his brother Azim, hastening to Kabul, took upon himself the Amirship. Abdur Rahman had hoped to have succeeded his father, but his uncle having forestalled him, he thought it politic to give in his allegiance to him, which he did by presenting his dead father's sword, in durbar, to the new Amir, who, like his predecessor, was now acknowledged by the Government of India as Ruler of Kabul and Kandahar.

The tide, however, was beginning to turn in favour of Sher Ali. Azim and Abdur Rahman quarrelled, and the former, by his extortions and cruelties, made himself detested by the people generally.

In March, 1868, Sher Ali's eldest son, Yakub Khan, regained possession of Kandahar for his father. In July father and son found themselves strong enough to move towards Ghazni, where Azim Khan's army was assembled. The latter, gradually deserted by his soldiers, took to flight, upon which Sher Ali, after an absence of forty months, entered Kabul on the 8th of September, and re-possessed himself of all his dominions, with the exception of Balkh, where Azim and Abdur Rahman (now reconciled to each other) still flew the flag of rebellion.

One of the newly-installed Amir's first acts was to inform the Viceroy of his return to Kabul, and of the recovery of his kingdom. He announced his desire to send some trusted representatives, or else proceed himself in person, to Calcutta, 'for the purpose of showing his

sincerity and firm attachment to the British Government, and making known his real wants.'

Sir John Lawrence, in his congratulatory reply, showed that a change had come over his policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, for he stated that he was 'prepared, not only to maintain the bonds of amity and goodwill which were established between Dost Mahomed and the British Government, but, so far as may be practicable, to strengthen those bonds'; and, as a substantial proof of his goodwill, the Viceroy sent Sher Ali £60,000, aid which arrived at a most opportune moment, and gave the Amir that advantage over his opponents which is of incalculable value in Afghan civil war, namely, funds wherewith to pay the army and bribe the opposite side.

The energetic and capable Abdur Rahman Khan had in the meantime collected a sufficient number of troops in Turkestan to enable him to move towards Kabul with his uncle Azim. On nearing Ghazni, he found himself confronted by Sher Ali; the opposing forces were about equal in strength, and on both sides there was the same scarcity of ready money. Suddenly the report was received that money was being sent from India to Sher Ali, and this turned the scale in his favour. Abdur Rahman's men deserted in considerable numbers, and a battle fought on the 3rd January, 1869, resulted in the total defeat of uncle and nephew, and in the firmer consolidation of Sher Ali's supremacy.

The change in policy which induced the Government of India to assist a struggling Amir with money, after its repeated and emphatic declarations that interference was